

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Minutes of the Riverside City Council Meeting

Held on

Saturday, April 30, 2022

Riverside, OH

CALL TO ORDER: Mayor Williams called the Riverside, Ohio **Special City Council Meeting** to order at 8:02 a.m. at the Riverside Administrative Offices located at 5200 Springfield Street, Suite 100, Riverside, Ohio, 45431.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Mayor Williams led the pledge of allegiance.

ROLL CALL: Council attendance was as follows: Mr. Denning, present; Mrs. Franklin, present; Ms. Fry, absent (arrived at 8:08 a.m.); Mr. Joseph, present; Ms. Lommatzsch, absent; Mr. Maxfield, present; and Mayor Williams, present.

Staff present was as follows: Josh Rauch, City Manager; Tom Garrett, Finance Director; Frank Robinson, Police Chief; Dan Stitzel, Fire Chief; Kathy Bartlett, Public Service Director; Kevin Miller, Operations Manager; and Katie Lewallen, Clerk of Council.

EXCUSE ABSENT MEMBERS: Mrs. Franklin moved, seconded by Deputy Mayor Denning, to excuse Ms. Lommatzsch and Ms. Fry. All were in favor. **Motion carried.**

ADDITIONS OR CORRECTIONS TO AGENDA: There were no additions/corrections.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Deputy Mayor Denning moved, seconded by Mr. Joseph, to approve the agenda. All were in favor. **Motion carried.**

Mayor Williams asked for all who wish to talk to speak directly into the microphone.

CITY COUNCIL ORIENTATION: Mr. Rauch stated their goal of the day is to get an idea of the facility conditions staff work in, an overview of local government in Riverside, and best practice examples as far as governance and working together. He presented council governance best practices stating it is difficult to get a number of people together to make collective decisions on what to do particularly when it comes to their community. He reviewed the four key public service values:

- Accountability/Representation – “Will of the people”
- Efficiency/Effectiveness – “Stewardship of resources”
- Social Equity/Diversity – “Equal opportunity/impact”
- Justice/Individual Rights – “Due process”

It is very difficult to maximize all these values at the same time when city council has to make decisions, which staff helps to navigate and make recommendations on. There is usually a trade-off. Some may hew more to one of the values than others and that is dependent on the issue or what is coming up and that is where important conversations happen. That is why the role as elected officials is special and the role staff plays to help them make the decisions is so critical.

Mr. Rauch stated that when council needs to make policy decisions they need to focus on the issues and not on people and to avoid personal attacks. They should use objective descriptions and statements, control emotions (engage while calm), find common ground, think “both/and” over “either/or”, and accept disagreement. Councils govern by majority and not by unanimity. If all can agree that is great, but that is not the expectation. The goal

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is the process, to have the conversation and make informed decisions and take well-informed votes, so the community moves forward. It is not a failure if some vote for and some vote against. Best practices involve listening, keeping an open mind, establishing a good relationship with other members of staff, strive to minimize polarizations among members, treat everyone with respect, always be honest, deal openly with staff, prepare for meetings, and ask questions. He added that one of the advantages in Ohio is that a lot of local government elections are non-partisan that is an opportunity to leave labels behind and talk about what they have to deal with. This can lead to a better role model on how government needs to work. They need to be transparent with one another. Council members should not: try to dominate a conversation, publicly criticize council decisions that you do not support, hold grudges about fellow councilmembers or staff, divulge information discussed in Executive Session, engage in side conversations during a meeting, conduct yourself in a way that cause you or the council embarrassment, over-analyze an issue, and be afraid to disagree.

Mr. Rauch explained that council's sphere tends to have more involvement in determining what they are doing, what services they are providing, what the tax levels ought to be, approving legislation, and passing the budget. Elected officials tell what the mission and vision of the city is going to be and set the tone and direction. In the manager sphere, staff can advise on the policies, but are involved in the management and day-to-day procedures.

Mr. Rauch presented the city government organizational chart. Later this year, he will take the information and match it up with detailed budget information and explanation for the budget books to provide the community a better perspective of how the organization is put together. He reviewed administration staff levels as being two full-time and two part-time with their budget being \$440,853 for personnel and operations. Key functions of administration include general administration, IT, Human Resources, and Wright Point. Discussion was held on including fund numbers for each department. Mr. Rauch stated the new finance software will probably change the accounting numbers, so it is easier to pull on a department by department basis across the funds what each department budget actually is. It is a harder process to do currently. He reviewed the staff for the community development department of four full-time staff members and a budget of \$656,916 for personnel and operations. Key functions of the department include business retention and expansion, development and land use, and property maintenance code enforcement. Economic development talks to business owners and developers who ask about various properties around town. They look at incentives, grants, and other needs they will have to bring them to the city. In zoning administration, Ms. Holt works with the planning commission and the board of zoning appeals. In code enforcement, Mr. Lunsford is doing property maintenance, grass notices, items in yards, structural issues, and keeping property parcels in code.

Mr. Rauch reviewed the finance department consisting of three full-time positions with a budget of \$340,347 for personnel and operations. Mr. Garrett stated they receive all the revenue and record it in the system. They also pay all the bills; the departments approve bill payment, but the finance department pays it along with operating expenses of the city. In addition, he acts as the income tax administrator and deals with residents who have a particular issue with their tax. This has fell off a bit with the third-party tax administrator, CCA, as they had set up some work days to do returns but have not done as many as in

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previous years. He maintains a list of grants and all the properties the city has. He prepares the annual renewal for the city's property insurance. They have a lot of tasks. Ms. Hitchins does day-to-day input of purchase orders and preparing checks. She invoices properties getting notices from the city for things like grass cuttings. The ones who don't pay get assessed and it gets sent to the county. All through the year, they answer questions from the other operating departments in the city about their finances. If they have a plan to do something and notify finance, then they can flesh out a funding plan and make sure it all fits. Mr. Rauch added that the major of the functions of finance will not change, but a major lift will be the process over the next 12 months on how they do it.

Mr. Rauch reviewed the fire department consisting of 20+ positions, 19 full-time with variable part-time. The budget is roughly \$3.3 million for personnel and operating costs. Chief Stitzel stated they take a lot of 911 calls, but the primary mission for them is prevention. Fire prevention includes public education, inspection, code enforcement, and over the last few years is they have gotten innovative to make things happen that they normally couldn't afford. They use some part-time funds to pay for a part-time fire inspector. This process has really improved in the past two years. Code enforcement and basic fire inspections in the past 25 years were not done that well so it has taken some time to get that up and running. With the ARP money, they have Firefighter Paula Balcom doing community paramedicine. She helps out in other areas of prevention and public education. Last year, they had over 5,300 calls for service, and average about seven people a day. They ask a lot of the personnel because they have other work load on top of that with station and equipment maintenance. They train almost every day, and there are projects that come up. One of his goals is to get into more advanced trainings like they did in Huber Heights recently, but they get stuck in basic training so much due to the high turnover. Safety is a major concern in protecting the firefighters and keeping them healthy. Some challenges include himself and only one battalion chief on shift at a time. They attend and sometimes conduct trainings. They have areas of responsibility that they must also do, and many do so on their days off. The remainder of the admin functions fall to him and his part-time admin assistant. He reviewed the rest of the crew including three lieutenants, 12 full-time firefighters/EMTs, and then part-time firefighters which are clocked by hours. He stated that overlapping incidents are challenging as 30% of call volume overlaps meaning one call comes in while another is still in process. They can get up to eight or nine calls at one time and need to have mutual aid come in. They rely on mutual aid so much and he wants to be able to repay that favor to neighbors when they call. He provided information on the needs of both fire stations. Administratively, he is decentralized with everyone being spread out in different areas across the city. Mr. Rauch stated this meeting helps council see these types of issues and how things are connected in terms of how things are located. He added when they are ready to have a conversation to add fire fighters, it is more than numbers. It is a space issue and where they have room for them; this is a hurdle they will need to overcome.

Mr. Rauch reviewed the police department stating they are the largest department in the city with 32 full-time positions and a budget of nearly \$4.7 million for personnel and operations. Chief Robinson stated he has noticed people have been driving much faster with less concern. They plan to change that. They are going to use some of the STEP money they have to do something like a blitz and make the police more visible to the community. They feel

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they need to get this under control. He stated that calls for service in 2021, a total of 19,653, were down compared to prior years where they normally receive 21,000 – 23,000 calls per year. Traffic crashes remained relatively the same around 708. That takes a lot of time and effort as most times two people go to a crash. There were people off and for 43% of the time they had only three people on the road; it is limited what they can do. There were 16,002 traffic stops, 195 injury crashes, 345 and domestic violence calls. They had 122 OVIs, when they are out they will get them, but when they are answering calls they aren't able to run the streets to look for them. They responded to 856 alarms, 456 9-1-1 calls, 740 follow up investigations, and assisted 339 motorists. He provided council with data from the police department on what they do on a yearly, monthly, and daily basis. He reviewed information from the sergeants, detectives, records clerk, property room, and victim advocate.

Mr. Rauch stated when it comes to police staffing, it isn't just the number of calls; it is the amount of time they have to spend on each call. One of the difficulties they have is they rely on Huber Heights for dispatch and one of the reasons they are moving to Motorola software is the ability to pull data out of their current system is limited. He has been trying to get the information on how much time they spend on calls with the police department. They want to run an analysis that shows every hour of the day, every day of the week, what kind of calls they are running. They will use that to figure out how to organize the shift and determine how many people they need to do the job.

Mr. Rauch reviewed the third largest department, public service, with 13 positions, 12 full-time and one part-time, and with a budget of nearly \$2.0 million for personnel and operations. Ms. Bartlett stated her department is responsible for everything that is in the public right-of-way. They get no back up from the state or county. The only exception is US 35 and Route 4; they have maintenance responsibilities but if they need reconstructed then the state would help them out. They have 20 thoroughfares and 307 residential streets for a total of 226 miles of roadway with 12 significant bridges and numerous culverts. They spend 45% of their time on street maintenance, 30% on mowing and park maintenance, 20% on storm water infrastructure maintenance, and 5% on building maintenance. They own 18 vehicles and 35 pieces of equipment, which are maintained by them though they do not have an inside mechanic as many cities have. Most of the staff is mechanically inclined, but if they cannot repair it, it does get sent out. She stated they do maintain roadways well during snow related incidences and they have an efficient system. She stated that they have to make some difficult decisions this summer as to whether they mow or pothole patch. The roadway pavement is at a point where they are disintegrating faster because of the age they are. The potholes are coming faster, and they have the same staff to patch those. She stated it takes four men to patch potholes for safety. There added education to the department and there are now two new titles, park technician and construction inspector. They process right-of-way permits for driveway aprons and all utility work done in the road right-of-way. They average \$5.0 million in grants, annually, and since 2019 have secured \$12 million in funding from outside sources. She stated she takes care of most of the calls from residents, for signs, for signals. Mr. Rauch stated the main challenge is when they get in to summer and people take their time off, the crew is just big enough where one or two folks go and for safety reasons they can't pothole. They have to make service trade off decisions based on the size of the crew and how it is structured.

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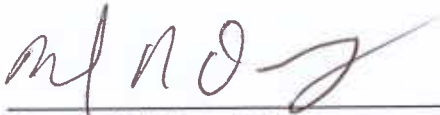
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Mr. Rauch provided a brief preview on the agenda and items that will be before them at the May 5, 2022 council meeting.

CITY TOUR: Council left chambers and took a tour of various city facilities.

ADJOURNMENT: Ms. Fry moved, seconded by Mr. Joseph, to adjourn. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.



Peter J. Williams, Mayor
Mike Denning, Deputy Mayor



Clerk of Council